

The Papal Brief

The text of Pope Pius XI's brief appointing Cardinal Bonzano as Legate of the Eucharistic Congress was read at the opening session. It is addressed "To our beloved son, John Bonzano, Cardinal Priest of the Holy Roman Church."

BELOVED SON:

GREETING AND APOSTOLIC BLESSING:

The International Eucharistic Congress is to be held next month in Chicago, a city of the United States of America, well known for its grandeur and prosperity, conspicuous also for the number and zeal of its Catholics.

Wherefore, in order that you may not only honor the occasion with the dignity of your exalted rank, but also, which is of greater import, may as the personal representative of the Roman Pontiff worthily preside over the Congress. We, in accordance with what We recently gave you to understand, do now, by virtue and authority of these present, appoint you Our legate *a latere* to the said Congress.

We readily foresee that, in the performance of this most important duty, you will receive in that vast country joyous welcome and acclaim—first of all because of the deep reverence and hearty good-will of Our children in America toward Us, and then in view of the reasons which prompted Us to select you for this high office.

In going thither you return, as it were, a citizen to your fellow-citizens—to those who, during your long sojourn as Apostolic Delegate among them, had the advantage of your presence and guidance and were edified by the manifold proofs of your piety.

TO OUTSHINE PREVIOUS CONGRESSES

According to reports, this event which We have reason to think will be duly recorded in the annals of the United States has been organized, mainly under the direction of the eminent Cardinal who so worthily and so zealously rules the archdiocese, on a scale of such magnifi-

cence that it seems likely in its splendor to outshine the splendor of previous Congresses. And if so, who shall find cause of grievance or complaint—seeing that the external solemnity, surpassingly great as it is, yet is fully equaled by the fruitfulness in Christian life which informs it—seeing, too, that the more youthful people are no whit less active than the older in grateful and worshipful recognition of God's bounteous love?

Now that such progress has been made in the organizing and conducting of these Congresses, what may not be expected from this one in Chicago, when it is recalled that the Canadian Eucharistic Congress, held eleven years ago in Montreal, produced such salutary results throughout the whole of North America, with great increase among the faithful of devotion to the Most Holy Eucharist?

For at that time there began, and since then there has developed into general practice, the pious exercise of the Holy Hour spent each week of each month, in public adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and as a necessary consequence many of the faithful are now accustomed to approach more frequently the table of the Lord.

That the coming Congress, Beloved Son, at which you are to preside, will be of the greatest benefit to all and cause even those outside the Church to marvel, may also be inferred from the fact that it is the first to be held in the United States—in that country of 20,000,000 Catholics—of whom vast throngs will gather in Chicago, besides the numbers that are expected to come, singly or in groups, from Alaska's frozen shore and other parts of America, from nearly all the countries of Europe, from China and Japan, from India and Africa.

As you are aware, Beloved Son, We cordially approve the themes that are to be treated and discussed at the sessions of the Congress; for since each and all of them, though from different points of view, have as their sole purpose the consecration and invigoration of Christian life through devotion to and reception of the Eucharist, their common result will be to bring men into closer inward union with Christ and make them live the very life of Christ Himself.

Rightly indeed have these subjects been thought out and proposed for open discussion. For it is needful to

stir up in each what the mystical writers call the interior life. As this is "conversation in heaven" and as it thrives or languishes according as charity burns actively or dies down, it evidently depends on the Eucharist, since this sacrament by its nature and effects, has for its principal object the increase of charity in the soul and the perfect union of the soul with God.

PRAYER IS THE ROAD

But by what means is the interior life nourished and developed if not by the spirit of prayer, by more thorough discipline of the soul, by self-oblation and self-denial? And again, what produces all these if not the more devout partaking of the holy table, wherein Christ Jesus through the sweetness of His goodness and love, withdraws us from earthly things and lifts us up to the things of Heaven, leading us by the example of His Eucharistic life to fashion our lives on His and imitate His sanctity?

Of those who, though they be perhaps habitual partakers of the heavenly repast, yet neglect their interior life, or dread the thought of it, what is to be said save only that they are spineless sort of Christians, unfit to strive for the holiest of causes? Are they any addition to the host of the blessed and saints in heaven in whom the Church glories? Do they not delude themselves, forgetful as they are of their own spiritual welfare and careless of their own perfection in thinking that they can be of any real service to the Catholic cause or promote the spiritual welfare and eternal salvation of their fellow men?

DESIRES "LOST SHEEP"

These matters, Beloved Son, We desire you to dwell upon and emphasize when in your official capacity as Legate, you address the whole assembly. Other things also We would have you in Our words urge upon the charity of those who will gather on this occasion in Chicago. We mean the return to the Roman Church of Our separated brethren which must be so sought and furthered that "all may be one." We mean that the work of the missions is to be far more widely spread, in order that temples and altars to Christ, hidden under sacramental

veils, may be multiplied in lands not yet subjected to His sweet yoke and that new adorers of the Eucharist may be added to these who now adore.

With all confidence, therefore, Beloved Son, set out on your journey to accomplish Our mandate—together with those whom We, in compliance with the wish of the Cardinal Archbishop and the people of Chicago, have assigned you as companions, make known to the citizens of Chicago and to all the visitors there assembled Our earnest wishes and prayers for the success of the Congress.

IMPARTS APOSTOLIC BLESSING

Remind them all, though perhaps no reminder is needed, that the more closely they unite themselves with the Divine Eucharist and the greater honor they pay It in public and in private, the dearer will they be to the Vicar of Christ who for more than one reason already holds them so dear.

Meantime, as a pledge of heavenly lights and gifts and an earnest of Our paternal affection, We most lovingly impart to you, Beloved Son, to Our Beloved Son, the Cardinal Archbishop of Chicago and to all who take part in the Eucharistic Congress, Our Apostolic Benediction.

Given at St. Peter's, Rome,

This eighteenth day of May in the year of Our Lord 1926, and the fifth of Our Pontificate.

PIUS P. XI.

The Address of the Papal Legate, John Cardinal Bonzano

IN this great throng one thought is supreme, in this solemnity one purpose is dominant. A common impulse urging us, a common aim attracting us, we are come from north and south, from east and west—from all the States of the Union, from the various countries of the New World—and from lands beyond the seas—to offer our tribute of adoration and love to Jesus Christ, our Eucharistic Lord.

A multitude of believers, yet holding one belief, speaking in various tongues, yet uttering the same unchangeable truth—divers of nation and custom and rite, yet worshipping the only Redeemer of men—we profess and most firmly believe that under sacramental veils Jesus Christ, God and man, is really present in the Holy Eucharist; that in the sacrifice of the altar He is offered the same clean oblation He offered on the Cross, and that in receiving Communion we partake of His body and His blood. This, together with the whole Catholic Church, we believe and proclaim as of God's revelation—because He Who is truth itself so teaches us; because He Who is the maker and ruler of heaven and earth commanded His Apostles, saying: "Do this for a commemoration of Me." Because He Who is master and giver of life declared: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life" (John vi. 51-55).

CONGRESS HAS WIDE IMPORT

Splendid in its outward form, impressive by its members, admirable for its reverent decorum, this Congress had a still deeper significance and a wider import. It has a meaning that reaches beyond the limits of this assembly, this city and this country, to turn hither the attention of the world, in wonder or in joy and veneration. It is a manifestation of faith—a tremendous visible act of faith.

It is an expression, not in words only, nor in the privacy of personal devotion, but in solemn and public deed,

of the Catholic spirit which makes us one with millions of our fellow believers and one with Christ Jesus, our High Priest and our Head. Above all, it is the outpouring of our hearts in thankfulness to Him Whose "delights are to be with the children of men."

This Congress, again, brings before us in present and visible form that living organic structure, the mystical body of Christ, which is the Church. For, "as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ and every one members of one another and having different gifts according to the grace that is given us" (Romans xii. 4-6).

By reason, then, of this diversity in office and function we here behold the vast assemblage of Catholic men and women, our beloved laity; and with them the priests, who break to them the bread of life; Bishops, who are appointed to rule the Church of God; members of the Sacred College, chosen counselors of the Vicar of Christ, the visible head of His Church, its supreme ruler and teacher.

But of him, the Sovereign Pontiff, we think with the thoughts of children, and with the tongues of loving children we name him Holy Father, who, not content with sending his fatherly greeting just listened to, in his desire to be present among you, but has deigned to appoint me, unworthy as I am, to represent his august person on this occasion. Truly a great honor this—to stand before you in his place and to address you in his name—an honor which only his surpassing love for America and American people can explain.

POPE SEES FITNESS OF U. S. SESSION

In granting me a privilege so singular the Holy Father knew full well that he was imposing on me no arduous task, but was giving me what I have long and earnestly desired—an opportunity to revive the memory of happy years, of experiences which lightened the burdens of official duty, of friendly intercourse with bishops, clergy and people, in whose kindness towards me I recognized their filial devotion to the Vicar of Christ.

More clearly than any one else, and more completely, Pope Pius XI. realized how fitting it is that the Eucha-

ristic Congress should be held in the United States. Have we not seen the nations of Europe within the last decade stretch forth their bleeding hands to implore America's aid? Have we not heard them crying out in sore distress for the means to live again, to rebuild what war had left in ruin? Needless to say their appeal has been heard, their pressing want relieved, their ebbing life restored.

Wherefore it is only meet and just that representatives of the countries of Europe should gather here to offer up praise and thanksgiving to Him Who has so lavishly bestowed His gifts upon this favored land and so wonderfully shaped the destinies of its people. Less than this we could not do and would not. Further than this America does not ask—save only her magnanimous deed become a pattern and encouragement to world-wide imitation.

Fitting also is it that our hymn of thanksgiving should rise to heaven from the city of Chicago—a city so cosmopolitan, so typical of America's energy and progress, a city which gathers the richest products of nature and toil to distribute them through the whole world. Typical, I say, not alone of American enterprise, but also of the aspiration for the higher life which makes industry the servant of the spirit and turns material gains to finer uses, even as the intellect of man transmutes the facts of sense to give them meaning and ideal value.

Here, too, religion, side by side with labor and culture, flourishes and spreads its benefactions—caring for those who are in need, providing for every form of suffering and sorrow, lifting the weak and guiding the strong, in the way of Christ, the eternal way of His salvation.

Right gladly, therefore, do I, in the Holy Father's name, offer the Cardinal Archbishop of Chicago, his clergy, the Catholic people, and all who call this city their home, sincere congratulations. With them and with those assembled here from far and near I rejoice most heartily on this auspicious event. I pray that Christ, our Eucharistic King, may bless the Congress with those spiritual results which the Holy Father so earnestly desires.

"I am the vine," says Jesus Christ, "you the branches; he that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing" (John xv. 5).

Without Christ all else is vain. Without the vital power that He alone can give, neither knowledge nor skill, neither effort nor apparent success, can bring hope to fruition or life to fulfillment. And this is why St. Paul, filled with the spirit of Christ, exclaimed: "I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20).

EUCHARIST FULFILLMENT

What a glorious substitution. What a perfect realization of the end for which Christ gave us the Eucharist. Would that each of us likewise could say with the Great Apostle—"Christ liveth in me; in my sacrificed thoughts, in my purpose and striving, in my word and action, in all my relations at home and abroad." Would that other men, friend and stranger alike, might feel, through contact with us, the blessed influence of Jesus abiding in our souls and spreading about us the fragrance of His sanctity and showing forth "the fruit of the Light in all goodness and justice and Truth" (Eph. v. 9).

If we would really benefit others according to the example of Christ, if we would preserve the home and the family tie in its strength and purity, if we would render society the highest possible service and give proof to our country of genuine loyalty, we must begin and continue by shaping our own individual lives upon the model which Christ sets before us. For so shall we be unto others as guides on the way to Life everlasting. So shall we lead them with the persuasive eloquence of example, to the excellent knowledge of our Saviour. "Now, this is Eternal Life; that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3).

ONE LORD, ONE FAITH

"Other sheep I have," says Jesus, "that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John x. 16).

These souls that belong to Christ through their belief in Him, their eagerness to hear His voice and to do His will, their cleanness of heart and their charity abounding

in many good works, these too must be brought together in His Church and nourished with the Bread of Life, that so in reality and not in name only there may be "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." Then shall the reproach of division be taken away from the Christian name and from those who glory in it, the evil of discord; then also with single purpose and mutual support inspiring its members shall a united Christendom, under the standard of Christ the King go forth to universal conquest and the spreading of His kingdom to the uttermost parts of the earth.

"Behold I say to you, lift up your eyes and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest" (John iv. 35). White because for them also Jesus Christ preached His gospel and gave His life upon the Cross. Ready for the harvest now as they were in His day, as they have been for centuries. Nothing else appeals more strongly to the heart of the Holy Father than the plight of those people who are hungering, though they know it not, for the bread which cometh down from Heaven. No work of Christian zeal more worthy, no enterprise more promising of rich reward than the missions which bear to the far-off lands the glad tidings of salvation.

It is a labor, indeed, but a labor of love; and its recompense is exceeding great. For "He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life everlasting; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (John iv. 36).

Truly a blessed day will that be, when from end to end of the whole world, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof the children of the Church shall kneel, even as we kneel here, adoring the same Divine Saviour, partaking of the same heavenly food, outdoing one another in charity, which is the bond of perfect peace.

Pax Christi in regno Christi—the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ; the reign of good will under His loving dominion; the freedom of the spirit and cheerful subjection of His law, the victory over evil, the triumph of right, the fulfillment of all worthy hopes and desires, behold the final aim which inspires the Holy Father and makes this Congress, in the truest sense of the word, Eucharistic.

"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a scepter

of justice is the scepter of Thy Kingdom" (Heb. i. 8). May the throne of Christ be exalted above all powers of earth. May His empire be established in the souls of men, and His scepter be acknowledged by all people.

And may the God of Peace Who brought again from the dead the great pastor of the Sheep, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the blood of the everlasting testament, fit you in all goodness that you may do His will; doing in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom is glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Sermon of Cardinal Mundelein

TWO and a half centuries ago the first white man, a French Jesuit priest, Father Marquette, landed on the banks of the river but a short distance from here. His first act was to erect his altar, celebrate Mass and give Holy Communion to the companions of his journey. A city whose first conscious breath, whose very moment of birth, was thus consecrated by the mystery of the Holy Eucharist seems justly to have been preordained in God's designs to be the site where the first public demonstration of love, loyalty and adoration to Christ, the King in the Eucharist, by the faithful of the United States, takes place on their own soil.

A Gospel story is being repeated here to-day. We all recall how on that morning more than nineteen hundred years ago Jesus of Nazareth, having come across the Sea of Galilee, stood on the shore and astonished the multitude by His declaration of the Eucharist, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven."

So, too, this morning on the shores of another inland sea the same Jesus of Nazareth appears here in the midst of His apostles, His disciples, His followers.

But how changed the scene! Since then Pentecost has come, and with it the guidance of the divine spirit in the Church. His apostles are not now simple fishermen, still casting their nets in the sea, but the bishops of His Church, come from all parts of the world, representing great congregations of millions of believers. They are gathered again about the Master to refresh their spirit during these few days, when they feel as close to Him as did their predecessors then in the Cenacle.

Here are the highest ecclesiastics of the farthest Eastern continents of Asia and Australia, bishops of South and Central America; here are gathered the faithful, with their priests and bishops, from every city and diocese of our own country and our sister Church of Canada by tens and hundreds of thousands, forming the greatest Catholic congregation ever gathered in one place in many years.

Nor are we deprived of the presence of the head and father of this great Christian family. His thoughts, his

prayers, his heart, are with us this morning. But this would not content him. From the very side of his throne he sends us one of his most trusted counselors, one bound to us by many ties, to represent him here, to preside in his name, and by his authority over these gatherings and conferences to become the spokesman for all of us.

His disciples, no longer a pitiful few, but many thousands of His priests, consecrated for all eternity to His service, their hearts even now burn within them, for when the morning was come again Jesus stood on the shore. But not ignorant are these like the disciples of old; when holding in their hands the host whose real substance had changed at their command, their hearts cried out with the beloved disciple, "*Dominus est*. It is indeed the Lord."

This morning a great multitude is stretched here at His feet, greater in numbers than all Judea held; not only the dwellers of this, one of the world's giant cities, but added thereto the thousands, the tens and hundreds of thousands of strangers within our gates, who have come from the North and the South, the East and the West, who have come in ships and trains, in cars and on foot to see and hear the Master as then. Again they form three great camps. There are those who will not believe, who, like the Jews of old, strove among themselves, saying, "How canst this man give us flesh to eat?" Even as then there are those who shut their ears and will not hear; again there are those who, having heard, turn away and harden their hearts; those who have not known, those who would not hear, those who did not care.

Then there were others, the lukewarm among His own followers, those who murmured, if not in words then by their deeds they, too, object, "This saying is hard and who can bear it?"

But as the years pass by and real education marches on, the doctrine of the Eucharist is perhaps not so hard to believe as in the days of the Saviour.

To those who would reject it to-day, it is not so much an offense to their reason as it is a reproach to their conduct. Indeed, we who have seen the signs and wonders of science in these latter years, we have no reason to turn away like the timid disciples of old, "This word is hard indeed and who can believe it?"

A great wheel near by swiftly swings into motion, its

many turns cause barely a hum on the quiet air; yet many miles away from here, in Eastern and Southern States, great cities suddenly change night into midday by the brilliance of the light that is generated in that wheel, entire structures are warmed by the heat it creates, long trains of heavy cars are moved swiftly by the power it produces.

This morning, even as I speak, I face a small metal box before me, and not merely thousands but perhaps even millions from ocean to ocean, the length and breadth of this land, may hear clearly and distinctly each syllable that falls from my lips, as clearly as do those within these walls. Why, even as late as the years of my childhood wonders such as these were unheard, undreamed of; indeed, to have spoken of them as possible even would have met with derision and incredulity.

Who will honestly say, in the face of wonders such as these and the many science will produce, that to the God Who has buried such wondrous things in our universe to Him the miracle of the Eucharist is impossible; that He Who can multiply the flames of light and the sounds on the waves of the air by millions, that He cannot cause His real body and blood to come down on thousands of altars at the call of His priests, and be taken under the cover of bread as the food for the millions of His children into their souls?

To-day Christ, the King of the World, clothed in the white garb of the Eucharistic species, pays His first ceremonial visit, makes His first triumphant entry into a city of the United States. Until now He has been imprisoned in our tabernacles, kept on our altars, closed in our churches. But now we bring Him forth, do Him royal honors, bear Him in triumph midst the multitudes, proclaim publicly our loyalty, profess our faith, pour forth adoration, present our petitions, offer our love.

And as the youngest daughter of the great Catholic family, with all the enthusiasm and energy of youth, we proposed to make this our feast day a memorable one; we have planned and labored without ceasing for many weeks; we have sent forth the call to the children of Holy Church the world over; we have asked them to come and with us honor the Son of God as He has never been honored before in this new land of ours. And behold, they have answered our call, and from every land under the

sun they have come, the greatest and the poorest, the prince, the prelate, the priest and the humble pilgrim.

No king on earth, no emperor of Rome was ever honored as Jesus Christ is honored to-day in the city of Chicago. The greatest figures in His Church to-day are gathered here, the primates of its oldest daughters, the highest representatives of the foremost Catholic nations in the world, France, Spain, Hungary, Austria, Bavaria and Ireland.

We are all here, this gigantic and representative congregation, to show our allegiance and pay our homage to the King of kings and Sovereign of all created things and Judge of the universe.

Nor have we come empty handed. Even as of old we have brought our precious gifts to Him; even from those who could not come, in distant lands and nearby towns, the faithful in every station, the great and the lowly, the old men and the little children are with our own people to-day in the greatest tribute, the richest offering, the most acceptable gift of a world-wide general Communion, rising like a vast cloud of incense to the throne of God as a united prayer for the intention of our Holy Father this day. Surely not all the gold and jewels of the universe would prove so pleasing in God's sight as this mighty oblation of contrite and loving hearts opened to receive the bread that cometh down from heaven this day.

To the multitude of earnest, honest souls outside the Church, this Congress, too, has its message. Far be it from us to look upon it as a demonstration of our strength and numbers. Little would it avail us were it to vaunt our superiority and our own glory. Rather it is our hope that the example of our vivid attachment to the Holy Eucharist and our evident appreciation of the gift that is ours therein may encourage them to learn for themselves of this marvelous condescension on God's part to us humans.

There are so many restless and unhappy souls in the world about us; the mass of wrecked homes, the great numbers of bleeding hearts, the growing disrespect for law and order, all point to us that there is something wanting in the life of our people to-day. May it not be that the banishment of the supernatural, the gradually vanishing figure of the real Christ, the God-man, the divine teacher,

the lawgiver, the just judge of the universe, His removal from the school, the fireside and the hearts of man is the underlying cause. Here in the Eucharist He stands forth, not as a myth, not as a hero in a fairy tale, not as a great figure that exists only in history, but as a definite, positive, living figure, really existing now, even as you and I.

To those searchers after truth we offer no arguments, no proofs of this real presence. Our poor little finite minds stand bewildered before the greatness of this miracle of divine love. They must do even as we, bow down in humble unquestioning belief in this truth which surpasses all human understanding and together with Peter and his successors cry out "to whom will we go, O Lord? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." Then we will learn, even as we have, how this bread that is come down from heaven becomes the protection to tender childhood, the safeguarding of youth, the strength of womanhood, the purifying force in manhood, the inspiration of priesthood, the consolation of the aged, our nourishment in life, our comfort in death, our reward in eternity.

And for us who are of the household of the faithful to whom God has given the priceless gift of being numbered among His children, who have so often been warmed and comforted and strengthened by His sacramental presence, our fervent prayers for ourselves and those dear to us is, that when death lifts for us the white shroud of the Eucharist we may continue to praise and worship face to face for all eternity the same God Whom on earth we adored in the sacrament of the altar, "*adoremus in æternum sanctissimum sacramentum*"—O sacrament that we adore, make us love thee forever more.

The Triumph of the Eucharist

REV. JOSEPH HUSSLEIN, S.J.

THE truth of the Eucharist is clear as the sun in the heavens. The unity of Catholic doctrine, from the days of Christ and His Apostles through all the centuries, can nowhere be more plainly illustrated than here in this central act of Christian worship.

And yet there has been a constant progression, not of the truth, which can never change, but on our part, in a more perfect apprehension and application of it. Here as elsewhere such a progression is perpetually going on within the Church, and is most beautifully exemplified in the Catholic devotional life connected with the Eucharist.

The Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, we have seen, was as clearly understood in the first centuries as in our own. "Wine and bread," wrote Irenæus, whose teacher was Polycarp, a disciple of the Apostles, "are changed by the word of God into the Eucharist, which is the Body and Blood of Christ" (*Adv. Hær.*). The Christians not merely received the Eucharist in Holy Communion at Mass, but took it to their homes.

St. Cyprian tells us how fire burst forth from the casket containing the Real Presence when a certain woman would have communicated herself unworthily. St. John Chrysostom thus vividly brings home to us the Faith in that Real Presence which the Church had always possessed since the days of the Apostles.

How many nowadays say: "Would that I could gaze upon His form, His figure, His raiment, His shoes!" Lo! thou seest Him, touchest Him, eatest Him. He gives Himself to thee, not merely to look upon, but even to touch, to eat, and to receive within thee. . . .

Consider at whose table thou eatest. For we are fed with that which the angels view with trepidation and which they cannot contemplate without awe because of its splendor. We become one mass with Him; we are become one body, one flesh with Christ. . . .

What shepherd feeds his sheep with his own flesh? Some mothers entrust their new-born infants to nurses. This He did not wish to do, but He nourished us with His own Blood, He united Himself with us. . . .

We [the priests] take the place of servants. It is He Who consecrates and transmutes [the bread and wine].—*Cf. "The Sacraments, II," Pohle Preuss, p. 64.*

There was a long period during which the "discipline of the secret" was carefully observed so that the Eucharist might not be desecrated by the pagans. Only on admission into the Faith was the Eucharistic Mystery entirely declared. As Origen wrote: "He who has been initiated into the mysteries knows the Flesh of the Word, Our God. Let us no longer dwell, therefore, on that which is known to the initiate, but must not be revealed to the uninitiate" (*Hom. in Levit.*). When Mass could not safely be celebrated in the midst of a pagan civilization the Christians descended beneath the earth and by the flicker of their feeble lamps worshiped their Eucharistic God in the rock-hewn chapels of the catacombs.

When the days of persecution were over and the Eucharist was triumphantly enthroned over all the earth, churches began to rise, pagan edifices gave place to Christian temples, and Eucharistic love and devotion manifested themselves in the zeal with which entire populations participated in the building of those magnificent cathedrals which were truly the communal work of the Ages of Faith. Nothing could be too beautiful, nothing too precious, nothing too splendid for Christ in His Sacrament of Love. Centuries were not too long a time to dedicate to the building of a single edifice where becoming honor might be rendered to the Eucharistic God.

Jeweled vestments, costly vases, golden chalices; all that art could conceive and love could lavish were devoted to His service where He made His abode in the midst of the children of men. Richly traceried windows told in glowing colors the Gospel story of His life. Sculptured arches led into His dwelling, forests of pillars upbore its mighty roof, pinnacled spires rose in beauty into the heavens above it. And all this wealth, all this wonder was devoted to that Real Presence of the Emmanuel, "God with us."

Here virgins consecrated their virginity to Him. Here young Levites entered to serve forever within His courts. Here the multitude worshiped as the Holy Sacrifice was offered, with a solemnity becoming this august mystery, and here they received His Body and Blood, the same that the Apostles received from His Divine hands.

So, therefore, it came about, in the course of time, that the Blessed Sacrament could be more worthily housed

than in the beginning, when it was possible to attend Mass only "from house to house," as the Acts of the Apostles tell us, or more regularly in special private dwellings, such as the Cenacle itself. That better opportunity fittingly to tabernacle their Divine Lord in their midst brought men also to worship before Him more and more frequently, until these public devotions assumed many and varied forms. This, however, did not imply a greater faith in the Real Presence than that possessed by the early Christians, who cheerfully risked prison, torture and death to attend at the Holy Sacrifice and receive Christ in the Sacramental Presence.

Quite naturally the early Church showed its devotion to that Real Presence first and foremost in perfecting the Liturgy of the Mass itself. With this fully developed, in the East and West, and with the magnificent cathedrals rising over all the earth to give due honor to that Divine Sacrament, the time had come for the introduction of the great feast itself of the Blessed Sacrament, Corpus Christi, which formed the high point of all the festivities of the Middle Ages. Then it was that the most colorful processions and resplendent ceremonies took place, with an entire population participating to show worthy homage to their Eucharistic Lord.

Having descended from Heaven into the womb of the Virgin Mary, God wished to descend still further, and to hide Himself in the tiny Host for love of men. What less, then, could we do than to seek with all our power to give Him love for love in His Sacrament of love?

So those devotions grew up around the Real Presence which now we know as Exposition, Forty Hours and Benediction—all most beautiful expressions of our attachment to Him, of our need of Him, of our faith in Him, of our confidence in Him. He bade us ask and we should receive, seek and we should find, knock and it would be opened to us. But where better could we go to Him than where, with all the certainty of Faith, we know Him to be truly present in the Eucharist?

Then, again, with the cult of the Sacred Heart, in our latter times, a new and remarkable impetus was given to Eucharistic devotion. The great apparitions themselves of Our Divine Lord displaying His Heart all flaming with love for us were intimately connected with the Blessed

Sacrament. Time and again He appeared to St. Margaret Mary as she knelt before the Tabernacle. The Feast of the Sacred Heart itself was to be instituted, according to His express will, on the First Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, when, as He directed, men were to honor His Heart "by receiving Communion on that day and making It a reparation of honor for all the insults offered to My Heart during the time that It has been exposed on the altars."

It was in particular men's ingratitude and forgetfulness of Him in His Sacrament of Love for which He wished that reparation should be offered, and great graces were promised in connection with Holy Communion received successively on Nine First Fridays, with the purpose of reparation—a practice frequently continued through life by receiving Communion on every First Friday. Out of these same manifestations arose the Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament, in honor of Our Lord's Agony, while everywhere devotion to the Sacred Heart helped to draw men closer to the Sacrament of Love, to make fit reparation for love unrequited.

Another Eucharistic outpouring of God's grace was the decree on Frequent and Daily Communion. This at once dispelled the wrong impressions that had withheld many from the more frequent or daily reception of the Body and Blood of Christ, through a false conception of the reverence due to this Sacrament. Men were now taught to understand more perfectly the purpose of Holy Communion, which was not given by Christ as a reward of virtue, but as a help in our needs, a strength in our weakness, and a remedy for all the ailments of our spiritual life. As the Good Shepherd, the Good Samaritan, the Lover of our souls He comes to us knowing all our feebleness and faults, and gently stoops to lift us up to Him.

Two things only could ever prevent us from receiving Him even daily; mortal sin and an unworthy motive. A spiritual purpose in receiving Christ suffices for the motive, while mortal sin can certainly be avoided by us always. Yet should any soul have been guilty of this, there remains the Sacrament of God's infinite Mercy to cleanse away the fatal stain and to permit her to approach again, newly cleansed, the Sacrament of Love. Hither, too, should we come constantly to pour out before the Taber-

nacle our needs, desires, and expressions of tender affection. Here should we pray, not merely for ourselves, but for all the world that it may return at last to Christ the King.

And let us not forget the place that Mary occupies in this sublime Mystery of Faith. Here, as elsewhere, we shall do well to approach Christ through her, and invoke her aid in our pleadings with Him in the silence of the Tabernacle or in our reception of Him in Holy Communion. *What Mary bore and Joseph fostered, Jesus gave us in the Eucharist, His Own, entire and Divine Self.*

And more than this, Mary, above all priests and people, holds the first place under Christ our Head in that priesthood of which we all participate. For, in a perfectly true sense, all the Faithful are indeed a "royal priesthood," since all are members of the Church, that Mystic Body of Christ, our Priest King according to the order of Melchisedech.

But coming now to the very Sacrament of the Altar itself, it is Mary who took the most intimate part in the Sacrifice on Calvary of which the Eucharistic Sacrifice is a perpetual commemoration, for she begot, nourished and offered up the Divine Victim Who is still the Victim mystically immolated in every Mass. It is Mary, too, at whose *Fiat* mankind was given in the Incarnation that Divine High Priest, the supreme Offerer in every Mass, Who already in her womb was the Christ, the "anointed" of the Lord. And, again, it is Mary through whom all graces of the Eucharist flow to us, for she is the universal Mediatrix with our Mediator Christ.

The Eucharistic Congresses, in fine, are the most illustrious example of popular devotion to-day. The magnificence of their gatherings, the splendor of their ceremonies, the impressiveness of their outward demonstrations, and their world-wide appeal to all within and without the Fold are one of the most glorious developments of that wonderful Eucharistic devotion of which Christ Himself is the Author. Their purpose is to bring all mankind to Him. Here verily we behold the Triumph of the Eucharist.